

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4606

September 28, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chairwoman, Committee on House
Administration
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Chairwoman Lofgren:

As you are aware, the House floor schedule this week contains the “Possible Consideration of Legislation Related to the STOCK Act.” I am glad to see the House finally taking up the idea of reforming policies related to Member stock trading. However, as one of the original sponsors of reform language – notably introducing HR336, the TRUST in Congress Act, some 2 years ago with my Democrat colleague from Virginia, Abigail Spanberger – I was interested to see the “final” language via Jake Sherman’s Twitter account last night.

The state of the House of Representatives is absurd – and that is not a partisan statement. Like virtually every other legislative idea or proposal, we have not had any robust debate on reforms to member stock trading, or even a “Member Day” hearing that would allow each member of the House to air individual views on the matter. This is a complex issue requiring thought, debate, amendment and a full airing in committee to build as much bipartisan agreement as possible rather than the normal cram-down from the top that permeates literally everything we do.

I will oppose this bill for a variety of reasons and do so unapologetically.

First, the process is absurd. Second, this bill has now – as usual, and predictably – moved the scope well beyond simply restoring trust in elected representatives and now includes staff, executive branch officials, and members of the judiciary, which raises a number of complications, not the least of which is making staff have to deal with cumbersome and potentially expensive restrictions. Third, the bill Rep. Spanberger and I introduced was the start of a conversation that we should all want to have – but there are many complicated questions surrounding the issue we should resolve. For example, setting up blind trusts (i.e., expense, timing, quality, House administration) can be expensive. Perhaps there should be dollar thresholds considering the many implications of causing members to force sell assets, especially for less wealthy members of Congress – lest we discourage citizens from seeking to pursue public office.

There is considerable merit to passing reforms to Member stock trading, as in 2021, Congress outperformed the market and bought and sold nearly \$290 million in stocks,¹ and it was recently reported that 97 lawmakers or their spouses have purchased or sold financial assets in industries that could be affected by their committee work.² There are other bipartisan proposals that have been introduced beyond that which Rep. Spanberger and I introduced. Like all pieces of legislation, these proposals are imperfect, and they

¹ <https://unusualwhales.com/politics/article/full>

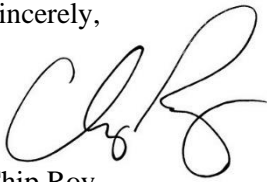
² <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/09/13/us/politics/congress-stock-trading-investigation.html>

require input from every Member of the House before consideration. Per above, and moving forward, a number of reasonable questions surrounding these reforms that have been raised by Members must be addressed prior to any vote on respective legislation.

Under no circumstances should the House of Representatives bring legislation to the floor that will impact every current and future Member of the House without full debate and discussion from the Members of this body. I request that there be a “Member Day” hearing, full committee consideration after such hearing, and debate on the floor – with amendment – before any legislation changing stock trading practices for Members comes to the floor for a vote.

I remain committed to achieving reform on this issue – but this is not the way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CR', with a large, stylized 'R' that loops back under the 'C'.

Chip Roy
Member of Congress

CC: Leader Kevin McCarthy and Ranking Member Rodney Davis, Committee on House Administration